

READING OF INDUS TEXTS IN PRIMEVAL KOYA/GONDI LANGUAGE PREVAILING UNIQUE SOCIAL SYSTEM AND CULTURE

Dr. Gangesh Shah Gondwana

From Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences, Banaras Hindu University

ORCID: 0000-0003-4285-6416

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on unresolved challenges surrounding the Indus script, particularly the lack of detailed observation, failure to identify the underlying language, and neglect of cultural continuities linking the Indus Valley Civilization with present and past societies within and beyond the Indian subcontinent. Scholars have largely failed to pinpoint the social groups whose beliefs, rituals, arts, and artefacts most closely resemble those of the Indus people. The study highlights the Koitoor (Koya/Gond) communities, concentrated in the middle highlands of India, whose distinct language, cultural practices, natural belief systems, and phratry, clan and totem-based social structures bear striking similarities to those of the Indus civilization. This resemblance suggests a potential continuity of lineage that has been overlooked in mainstream research. A major focus is the significant work of Dr. M.R. Kangali, who in 2002 deciphered 225 individual signs, 43 compound signs, and 215 texts in Gondi with consistency. Despite the failure of advanced methods and multilingual approaches by global scholars over more than a century, Kangali's findings-such as the reading of key seal numbers M 304 and M 1937-75 (right to left): *Aal Koya Pari Pahandi Muthawapoy Aand; Hatum Payar Ta Muthawapoy Aar* ("This is the Koya Pari Pahandi Chief-Preceptor; the Chief Preceptor Authority of Saga-relationship") remain under-recognized. This study urges global scholarly attention to reconsider Kangali's Gondi-based interpretation as a promising key to decoding the Indus script.

Keywords: Aal (Person, This, Professional, King/Controller etc. as per context); Gondola (Community, Social Group,); Koitoors (Progenies born from the mother's womb, Koyavanshi Gonds); Naalkot (Place, Settlement Site, Town, Suburban etc.); Potukot (Purvakot, Place, Settlement site,).

INTRODUCTION

Many scholars from diverse fields have attempted to interpret the Indus script, employing various methods and technologies such as computational analysis and comparative linguistics. These efforts have drawn upon ancient and classical languages, including Phoenician, Akkadian, several Dravidian tongues (Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Tulu), pre-Dravidian languages like Brahui and Santhali, Prakrit, Pali, and Indo-Aryan language Sanskrit, as well as Karen (a Sino-Tibetan language) and the Austroasiatic Mundari language. Among these, Sanskrit and its literary, ritual, and cultural traditions have been examined in great detail- particularly by non-Koitoor (non-Indigenous) Indian scholars- who sought to associate Indus Valley inscriptions on seals, terracotta, pottery, and other artifacts with the Vedic and later Vedic period, despite the fact that Vedic texts were compiled much later and only after the emergence of the Nagari script.

Researchers have tested a wide range of languages and cultural frameworks in attempts to decode the script and shed light on the Indus Valley Civilization. The civilization's advanced character- demonstrated through urban planning, metallurgy, and trade- is well established. Yet, because the script remains undeciphered, essential questions about the civilization's identity, linguistic affiliations, and cultural figures remain unanswered.

Despite decades of research, the pictographic Indus script continues to elude definitive interpretation and challenges scholars worldwide.

Notable linguists such as Robert Caldwell, Jules Bloch, and George Grierson argued that Gondi (also known as the Koya or Koitoor language) predates other Dravidian tongues, classifying it as proto-Dravidian. They observed that Gondi possesses distinctive root morphemes and vowel suffixation patterns absent in mainstream Dravidian languages. This led to the suggestion that the Koitoor/Gond language may represent one of the earliest linguistic layers in the Indian subcontinent and possibly the ancestor of all Dravidian languages.

This hypothesis strongly influenced Dr. Moti Rawen Kangali, who questioned why Gondi had been categorized as pre-Dravidian. He conducted extensive philological research to identify the linguistic features distinguishing Gondi/Koya from other Dravidian languages. His findings were published in major works such as *Gondi Bhasha Shabd Kosh* (Parts I and II), *Gondi Vyakaran*, and *Bhasha Rachna (Gondi Kadkiyan Unde Lambej Chavadi)*, which document Gondi's root morphemes and grammatical system.

Kangali's scholarship drew upon the Gondi glossary by Gond writer Maniravan Dugga, as well as the works of Bodhankar, Savdekar, Patvardhan, Pandey, Chadwick, and Bishop Failbull. He also critically examined grammatical studies by Caldwell, Bloch, Chadwick, Grierson, and M.G. Ranade. These efforts led him to argue that Gondi root morphemes could unlock the Indus script, resulting in his proposed decipherment in 2002.

However, Kangali's pioneering work has not received recognition from mainstream academia in India and abroad. His contributions to the study of the Indus script and the cultural heritage of the Koitoors- the Indigenous people of Koyamoorideep (also known in Koitoor traditions as Sambhoodeep, Singardeep, and Gandodeep)- remain underappreciated. His understanding and decipherment attempts were carried out in Gondi and explained in Hindi using the Devanagari script, reflecting both his linguistic innovation and his dedication to preserving Indigenous knowledge.

Although employed outside academia at the Reserve Bank of India in Nagpur, Kangali made major intellectual contributions with limited resources. His archaeological and linguistic writings- such as '*Saindhavi Lipi Ka Gondi Mein Udvachan*' / '*Decipherment Indus Script in Gondi*' (2002), *Gondwana Ka Sanskritik Itihas*, *Gondwana Kot Darshan*, *Pari Kupa Lingo Koya/Gondi Punem Darshan*, *Gondi Vyakaran* and *Bhasha Rachana*- stand as landmark works that document and revive Indigenous epistemologies and oral traditions.

Among his most influential ideas is the "natural origin" theory of the Koitoors (also known as Kuyavas or Koyas), who trace their roots to Amoorkot (modern-day Amarkantak), their *vansh-bhidi* (ancestral homeland). This theory encompasses their geographic traditions, cosmology, and the linguistic beginnings of Gondi, locally called Goendari. According to Koitoor oral tradition, the language arose from the goendari/damaru sounds of the 44th middle Sambhoosek, later identified as Sambhoo Mahadev of Penkmarhi (Pachmarhi). Goendari thus developed as a sacred linguistic system based on natural sound patterns.

Kangali described Koitoor society as highly intricate and ecologically rooted, comprising 12 *sagas* (phratries), 750 *paaring/paading* (clans), and 2,250 *paadi-hindaan* (totemic symbol), with each clan assigned three totems under the guidance of the muthawapoy / greatest guide Pahandi Pari Kupa Lingo. Lingo, revered as an ancient chief preceptor, along with his *madund koti chelaan* (33 types of disciples), systematically classified local flora, fauna, and even non-living entities- animals, birds, plants, reptiles, trees, and more- forming the basis for Koitoor clan-totem associations. This represents one of the earliest structured attempts to integrate linguistic, ecological, social and cultural systems.

Supporting this, Atkinson have concluded that “the origin of the language and its sound-morphological structure largely evolve from the *indi+genus* (koya+toor/indigenous/tribal) socio-cultural background.” In relation to ancestry, Tony Joseph’s research lends strong support to Indigenous claims. He argues that 10 to 40 percent of Indian men carry paternal lineages tracing back to the earliest Out of Africa migrations. He suggests that a tribal (Koitoor) woman- for instance, an Indigenous Gond woman from Bastar- might best embody the genetic continuity of Indian populations. Carrying the M2 MtDNA lineage, one of India’s deepest, she symbolizes the country’s migratory and mixed heritage. Such a figure represents a shared identity across region, language, and social divisions, with roots potentially reaching back to the Harappan era, possibly even inspiring the famed “dancing girl” of Mohenjo-daro (c. 2500 BCE), a cultural icon that continues to shape India’s collective memory.

INTERNAL NARRATIVES AND RELEVANCE

Based on the traditional knowledge of the Koya people, as passed down through generations, the creation story and history of their world are deeply intertwined with geography and cosmology.

The Creation of Earth

According to Koya belief, the earth was originally a single landmass, a "Pangaea dai" or "earthmother," that later divided into two main parts: Andodeep and Gandodeep. Andodeep comprised four continents, while Gandodeep had five, totalling nine united lands. This is reflected in a traditional Gondi song that speaks of an earth of nine parts and a world of sixteen. Geographers suggest this may correspond to the northern (Angara Land/Laurasia) and southern (Gondwanaland) hemispheres.

The Koya people have also preserved knowledge of the solar system's creation in their songs. One such song describes the earth as a sphere of water, soil, heat, and air that was created in space. It is considered one of the "beads of the garland" worn by the sun (Purba), shining with the sun's light and energy. This view portrays the earth as a life-giving mother.

Early Rulers and Social Structure

Koya traditions speak of a long line of eighty-eight Sambhoos who ruled from Penkmarhi (Pachmarhi) in the Satpura range over the landmass known as Singaardeep (Gandodeep). A powerful figure named Pahandi Pari Kubar Lingo, a revered preceptor of the Koya race, is credited with structuring the ancient Koya society during the rule of middle pair Sambhoo-Gavara, one of the 88 couples who ruled on this huge land one by one.

Through deep meditation and a profound understanding of nature, Lingo established the 'Sagawen Social System'. This system was meticulously organized into:

- Twelve Saga (phratries)
- Seven hundred fifty Paaring (clans)
- Two thousand two hundred fifty Paari-hindaan (totems)

This complex social system was based on a detailed list of local animals, birds, trees, and plants, highlighting the Koya people's deep connection to their environment and their intellectual approach to social organization.

Koya traditions hold that their great preceptor, Pahandi Pari Kubar Lingo, along with his 33 types of disciples, spread the Koya Punem (the true path of nature) across the ancient land of Koyamoorideep during the rule of Sambhoo-Gavara. This rich history, which predates many known civilizations, is documented in various Gondi songs and oral traditions.

Reclaiming Koya History and Identity

Modern Koya intellectuals and activists are actively working to preserve and redefine their historical identity by compiling these oral narratives, folklores, and ancient legends. They believe in the inter-continental drift theory, which aligns with their ancestral belief in the original supercontinent. They assert that the Gondwana movement can unite indigenous peoples worldwide, allowing them to collectively fight for their natural rights to land, water, and forests. This global solidarity, they believe, is necessary to combat exploitation and hardship.

Scholarly Views and Historical Revision

Scholarly research, such as that by E.J. Michael Witzel, suggests that the cohesive mythology of Gondwana could date back at least 50,000 years, coinciding with the migration of Australian and Melanesian peoples. This highlights the need to re-examine established historical narratives and prioritize the indigenous accounts of groups like the Koitoors (Gonds).

The text and internal narrative call for a shift from imposed, modern theories to a more natural and authentic understanding of the Koya people's origins. It emphasizes the importance of studying their own narratives, supported by geological, anthropological, and archaeological evidence. This approach would allow for a more accurate understanding of Koyamoorideep- the ancient land known by their ancestors. Andodeep (the northern hemisphere's Angaraland/Laurasia) and Gandodeep (the southern Gondwanaland)- a term that predates the modern name "Gondwana Land," coined by Eduard Suess.

Who was Koya Pari Pahandi Kupar Lingo

The author got information about Koya Punem Muthwal Pahandi Pari Kupar Lingo from Lingo Muthwal Sumarni Manterk from No. 1 to 7. Of which the first manter says as follows:

Harkota, Murkota, Purkota Tor Poy Rajaani.

Kamka, Iruk Pungar, Yeta Mavor Lingoni

Yumma, Gunga, Sulja Neeva Aandu Yerkoli.

Sindhali, Bindali Kajoli Neeva Surkoli.

Koya Maanvaan Sitoni Saga Gongona Joli.

Ned Vaasi Runja Sarri Hudita Mava Penkoli.

Pahandi Pari Kupar Lingo was a revered figure in Koya tradition, a "Muthwal" or a great teacher and natural philosopher. He is described as a king who ruled over the ancient "gandrajya" (kingdoms) of Harkota, Murkota, and Purkota, which are linked to historical sites like Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, and Potukot. Lingo is honoured in traditional songs for his role as the architect of the phratrial social system for the Koya people. He is said to have gained true knowledge of nature by meditating in forests named Sindhali, Bindali, and Kajoli, and his sacred bathing places are the Yumma (Yamuna), Gunga (Ganga) and Sulja (Sutlej) rivers. The manter mentioned as above, is a prayer to Lingo, asking him to visit and bless the Koya people at their ancestral shrines.

The Kinship and Marriage System

Kupar Lingo established social rules that continue to influence their society. His key contribution was a sophisticated kinship system that governed marriage alliances and social harmony, a system where marriage was strictly prohibited within the same kul (clan) or totem. This rule mandated marriage alliances with different clans, known as "odd kuls." This framework established two types of kinship:

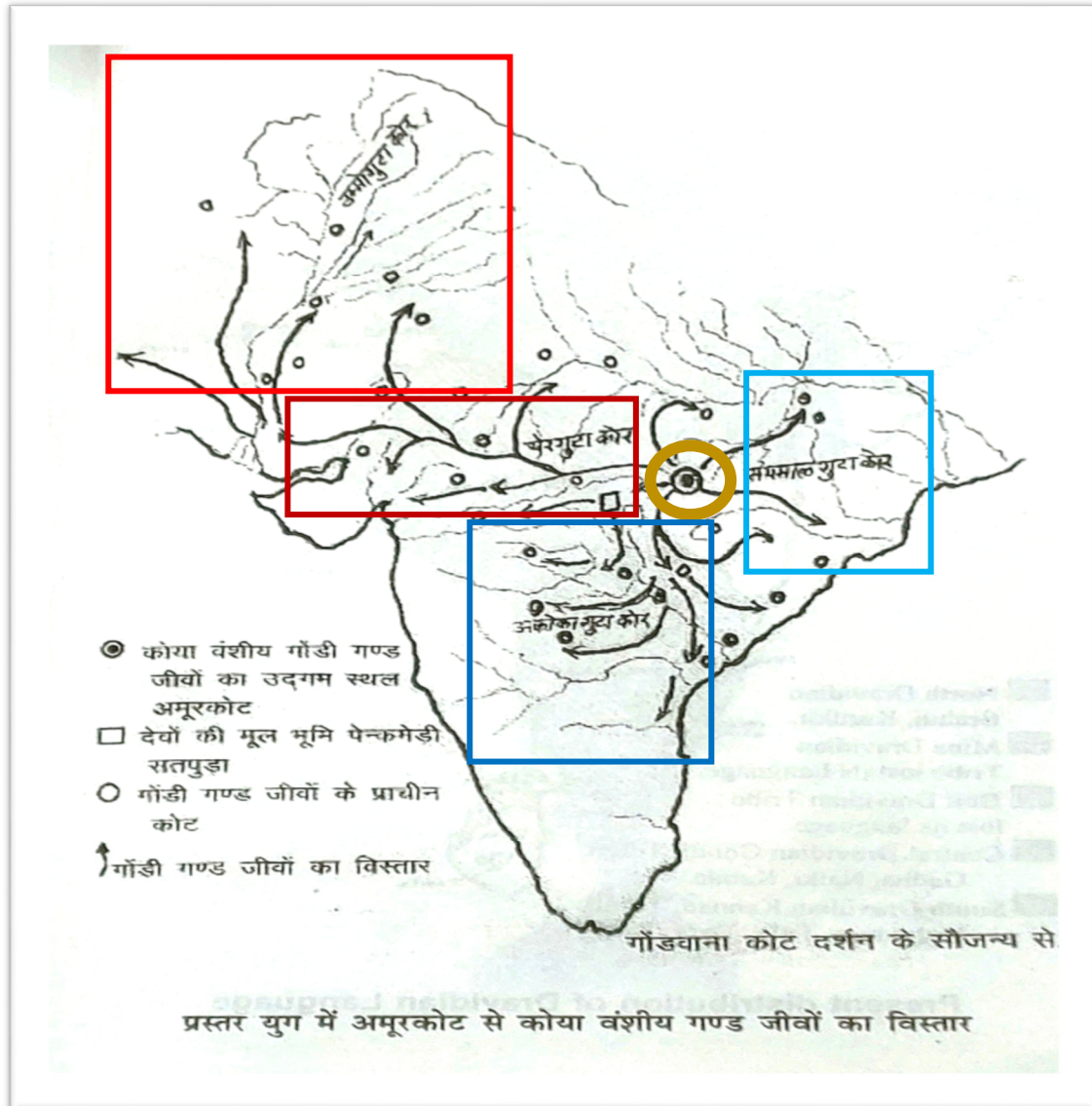
- **Even Kinship:** This group includes close family members like parents, siblings, aunts, and uncles. Marriage within this kinship is forbidden.
- **Odd Kinship:** This group consists of in-laws and maternal relatives. While they are considered different clans, marriage is still prohibited within them. This system, known as "Gandgot," (relationship among gans) aimed to create a broad network of interconnected families and fostered a sense of unity across different groups. This concept of all people being part of one big family, or "Vishva Ek Kutumb," is attributed to Lingo and is seen as a foundational idea of the "Gondolai Lifestyle."

Social and Political Impact

The philosophy of 'balanced non-violence' ("Munjok Darshan") and peaceful coexistence, promoted by Kupa Lingo, led to significant social and political developments. The broad marriage system created an atmosphere of goodwill, mutual understanding, and prosperity. It helped unite clan chiefs and fostered an early form of "Gandtantra," or a republican system. This system was built on mutual understanding, a lack of rivalry, and an absence of corruption, and it allowed for the smooth integration of social norms, culture, and politics. This also led to a healthier and stronger community with high-quality offspring, with the daughter of one clan becoming the respected "kulbadhu" (clan bride) of another.

Divisions of Ancient Koyamoorideep

In ancient period, land of Koitoors of Koya race was called 'Koyamoori deep' meaning country of the Koya-marring (Koya-santati/progenitors). There were four divisions of the ancient Koyamoori deep such as:[1]



Map: Expansion of Koya Vanshiya Gondi gandjeevas in Stone Age from origin place **Amoorkot** (Amarkantak) towards **Ummogutta Kor**, **Afokagutta Kor**, **Saimalgutta Kor** & **Yergutta Kor**. **Source:** Kangali, M.R. (2002). Saindhvi Lipi Ka Gondi Mei Udvachan (Decipherment of Indus Script in Gondi), p-149.

1. Ummogutta Kor (Northern division)
2. Afokagutta Kor (Southern division)
3. Saimalgutta Kor (Eastern-North division)
4. Yergutta Kor (West-Central division)

In this context, Gondi Punemi Muth Lingo Mantars give us vital and surprising information about the following very ancient gandrajyas (states), dhoda (rivers), dangud (forests) and metta (mountains) in the above-mentioned four divisions.

Gandrajyas: Purvakot, Murvakot, Harvakot, Amoorkot, Sirvakot, Varvakot, Narvakot, Sarvakot, Yerguddakot, Pendurkot, Patalkot, Chiterkot, Adilkot, Lankakot, Sudamkot, Parandulikut, Keerandulkot, Saburkot, Siyalkot, Sumerkot, Umerkot, Sinarkot, Meenarkot etc. [2]

Dhoda (Rivers): Naralmadal, Javaral, Mahadal, Songodal, Mayan, Pengoda, Vengoda, Penkdhoda, Gondari, Khodari, Sambhur, Magondmoori, Bharet, Tagari, Urtagari, Paneer, Penail etc. [3]

Dangud/Keda (Forests) and Metta/Metu (Mountains): Ummoli, Sindhali, Bindari, Kajali, Romroma, Bhimagarh, Outbanta, Nilkonda, Saymandi, Siyandi, Pullimetta, Redummetta, Bakalmetta etc. [4]

Above all gandrajyas, rivers, mountains and forest regions existed in the country named 'Koyamoori Deep' of the Koyavanshiya Gondiwon Gondolas which was so large; intellectuals may imagine and understand this primeval fact. Same way, first (primeval/primitive) 'Punem' (satya marg/ code of conduct/natural belief system) of Indian subcontinent and present India (Bharat) was 'Koya Punem' of Koyavanshiya Communities (Gonds-Gondolas). Hereafter native Bauddh Dhamma, Jainism, and immigrants' Vedic religion, Parasi, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism (modified name given to immigrants' Brahman religion very later on, and, now Sanatan Dharm is being called and propagated), Sikh religion and other various sects, faiths etc. chronologically emerged on this land contrary to an original ancient culture, natural beliefs based on nature and 'Koya Punem' pioneered by the great natural philosopher Pahandi Pari Kupar Lingo, a muthawapoy (guru mukhiya/ chief preceptor) of the primeval Koitoors.

In the researcher's view, above ancient kots (gandrajyas) namely Murvakot, Harvakot, Sirvakot, Siyalkot, Sumerkot, Umerkot; and river sites: Magondmoori, Bharet, Tagari, Urtagari, Paneer, Penail and mountains: Saymandi, Siyandi, Pullimetta, Redummetta, Bakalmetta [5] appear to be situated beyond the present Indian boundary in the north-western regions or beyond Pakistan, Afghanistan and further far away to the adjacent connecting regions, nevertheless, it is a subject of historical and archaeological research to find out their actual location.

In this context, this is to bring the reality to the surface that names of several things and most of the old and historically important places, towns, cities, capitals, monuments, forts, buildings, ponds, bawdy, rivers, mountains, hills, names of deities, kings, queens and other antiquities of the Gondwana Bhui have deliberately been changed and christened new names by invaders and immigrant rulers in this land from time to time in the history of Indian subcontinent to diminish and delete the real history and glory of the native people and their kings, queens, chieftains and rulers; for examples: from Garha Katanga to Jabalpur; Chandagarh to Chandrapur; Nam Nagar to Ram Nagar (Mandala), "Jango Dai to Maa Jagdamba; Kali Kankali to Mahakali; Wendai Aanchel to Vindhyaivasini; Bamlai Dai to Bamleshwari (Dongargarh); Sambhoo (Sambhoo-Sek/Sambhoo Madau- king of panch khand dharati) to Shankar, Mahesh or Shiv Shankar; Salla-Gangara to Shaligram; Lingo Pind (Sambhoo-Gavara Pind, symbol of male-female/Nar-Maada) to Shiv-Ling; Jaayjantor Rajaal (king of flora & fauna/Sambhoo Madau) to Pashupatinath" [6]; Bhimalpen to Mahaveer or Bajarangbali; Madund Kot Deities (thirty three type deities) etc. of the Koitoors of Koyamoorideep (Sambhoodeep) changed into taintis (thirty-three) crore devata of Brahman Dharma (Hindu), and many more other things changed, adopted (occupied), and imposed back upon the locals, as if, these things were belonged to them, and caused to enforce these stolen identity be considered their real and superior one over native identity. This is the reality of the land of India and neighbouring countries where immigrant /outsiders subjugated the local kings (chieftains/rulers of their gans) and their subjects and converted to their own imaginary religions by force to the far limit, or by creating unfavourable conditions and providing some economic and other lusts of life arising out of the social and political situations and compulsions with respect to the periods of time and then prevailing circumstances.

- [1] Kangali, Chandra Lekha (2011). Jeev Jagat Ki Utapatti, Utthan, Patan Aur Punaratthan Sangharsh, Ujjawal Society, Jaitala Road, Nagpur, Maharashtra, pp. 24-25.
[2] Dhurve, Shushila (2014). ‘Jai Gondwana’ Rang Prakashan Indore, p. 24.
[3] Ibid, p. 27 & Kangali, Moti Rawen (2018). ‘Gondwana Kot Darshan’ pp. 24-44.
[4] Dhurve, Shushila (2014) ‘Jai Gondwana’ Rang Prakashan Indore, p. 27.
[5] Ibid. & Kangali, M.R. (2018). Gondwana Kot Darshan, pp. 24-44.
[6] Kangali, M.R. (2011). Pari Kupar Lingo Koya/Gondi Punem Darshan, pp. 12-18 & Paul, Anuradha (2013) ‘The Gonds Genesis History and Culture, pp. 144-45.

PURPOSE

The author aims to highlight the remarkable and credible reading/decipherment of the Indus script achieved by Lingo Moti Rawen Kangali of Nagpur. Kangali successfully identified nearly all fundamental, compound, paired, and tripled Indus signs and translated more than 240 inscriptions into the primeval Gondi language. Yet, despite the coherence and importance of his findings, his research has been largely overlooked by mainstream academia and Dravidian scholars in India. This neglect stems from issues tied to indigeneity, identity, deep-seated biases, and socio-political as well as cultural intolerance in India, leaving his work unacknowledged internationally even after 23 years.

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Early observations of Harappa began with Masson (1826), Burnes (1831), and Cunningham, who described the site’s ruins. In 1924, John Marshall suggested the Indus Civilization was non-Aryan and possibly Dravidian in language. Subsequent scholars proposed diverse theories: Von compared the script to Easter Island glyphs; Smith and Gadd emphasized its pictographic nature; Nath and Langdon speculated Sanskrit or Brahmi connections; Heras (1953) suggested a proto-Dravidian picto-phonographic system; Lal (1966) and Wheeler (1968) studied writing direction and structure. Soviet scholars, Fairervis, Mahadevan, and Parpola supported Dravidian-based interpretations, while others, like Waddell, proposed Sumerian-Sanskrit links.

Later works included Possehl’s balanced review (1996), Witzel’s scepticism of Indus literacy (2004), and Chadha’s cryptographic perspective (2010). From 2009–2011, Rajesh Rao introduced computational methods such as entropy and typology analysis. More recently, Wells (2015) argued the script was logographic with proto-Dravidian roots. Despite extensive research, no decipherment has yet achieved consensus.

TROUBLE OF INDUS SCRIPT

Scholars have long argued that the greatest obstacle in deciphering the Indus script is the absence of bilingual inscriptions, which prevents reliable comparison and translation. Researchers across the world have struggled to determine the meanings of individual and combined signs, particularly since the underlying language remains unknown. They have also been unable to explain the symbolic use of animals, humans, birds, and other motifs on the seals and, in the script. Moreover, attempts to connect the Indus civilization with established cultures, traditions, arts, artifacts, or social systems that might provide continuity or context have largely failed. The only notable exception is Dr. Kangali of Nagpur, whose Gondi-based interpretations present a distinctive and coherent reading of the script- though his work continues to be largely overlooked.

APPROACH (METHODOLOGY)

The study applied an indigenous cultural-linguistic framework rooted in Koya social structure, traditions, and the Gondi language, whose unique morphemes and grammar differ from mainstream Dravidian tongues. Drawing on folklore, rituals, art, and songs, as well as Dr. M.R. Kangali's Gondi synonym lists and Fairservis's interpretive model, the author decoded Indus signs by selecting the most appropriate terms. This approach was tested on inscriptions and signs from sites such as Kish, Ur, Telloh, and Rakhigarhi including Harappa and Mohen Jodaro. Supported by genetic evidence highlighting Koitoor/Goand ancestry (Joseph, 2018), the method made consistent and meaningful interpretations—unlike previous mainstream attempts.

NATURE OF INDUS SCRIPT AND TEXT

The Indus script, inscribed on seals, tablets, and ceramics, uses pictorial symbols and is generally regarded as a logo-syllabic system with about **150–200** core signs and roughly **419 signs** including affixes. These signs appear to express short words or sentences denoting names, places, titles, enterprises and activities, with meaning derived from phonetic and contextual cues.

In Gondi/Koya-based interpretation, recurring signs show consistent meanings: for instance, a

jar-shaped sign  is read as *Aala*, while a human-shaped figure  is *Aal*, meaning “person, worker, king, or professional” depending on context. Variations of *Aala* with diacritical

marks generate additional phonetic values such as  *Aand* (“is”), also this means *Aana*

(possessive case), and forms like  *Aandi*,  *Pahandi*, and  *Murandi*, signifying stages sequentially such as initial, great and highest. These interpretations suggest that Indus scribes constructed sentences- typically right to left, using subject, object, and verb structures.

PATTERN OF INDUS TEXTS

1366			
1270			
1187			
2557			
1620			
3074			
H-103			
1224			
1114			
1293			

Table: Source- Saindhavi Lipi Ka Gondi Mei Udvachan by M.R. Kangali (2002), page-18.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

1. The pre-Dravidian Koya (Gondi) language shows deep linguistic, cultural, and social parallels with the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC), pointing to a shared ancestral heritage.
2. Insights into the structure and meaning of Indus inscriptions become clearer when interpreted through the Gondi language, traditions, arts, and artefacts. For instance, the jar-shaped “measuring pot” symbol, often placed at the end of sentences, corresponds to *Aand* or *Aandur* in Koya, meaning “is” in English.

3. Many pictorial inscriptions refer to names of leaders, individuals, titles, settlements, and professions, mirroring the social, economic, and spiritual systems (*punem*) still present among the Koitoor (Koya) people.
4. Numeric symbols serve dual functions—representing numbers while also conveying additional meanings based on their placement and combination with other signs.
5. Indus texts generally follow a subject–object–verb order and were inscribed by scribes in a right-to-left sequence.
6. Apart from Kangali’s deciphered texts, the remaining inscriptions can also be coherently interpreted in Koya/Gondi, provided they are read from right to left and, in some cases, beginning from the head of the depicted animal (field symbol).

PREDOMINANT KOYA/GONDI WORDS AND THEIR ACTUAL MEANINGS

- **Koitoor/Koytur** = *koya* + *toor/nattur* → “Koya blood” or “descendants/offspring of the womb,” referring to the progeny of the Earth Mother or human mother.
- **Gond or Goand** = *go* + *and* → “earth + living entity,” denoting a human being or life form (*Goand* is the spelling used by Robert Caldwell).
- **Gotul** = *go* + *tul* → “knowledge + centre,” the original learning centre (ancient school system) where the youth of the Koya race were educated in *Koyamoorideep* / *Gandodeep* / *Singardeep* / *Sambhooideep* / *Gondwana* / *Ganddharwana* / *Gandmandana*. The later *gurukul* system was essentially a later imitation by outsiders.
- **Gongo** = An expression of gratitude to nature and cosmic entities, as well as remembrance and reverence for ancestors (*Sagapenk* in plural; *Sagapen* in singular).
- **Lingo** = *Lai* + *Ang* + *O* = *Leng* + *Ang* + *Odaal* → *Leng* = sound, *Ang* = natural rhythm, *Odaal* = composer. Refers to the creator of the vowels and consonants of the *Goendari/Gondi* language, said to have originated from the sounds of the *damaru* of the central *Sambhoosek*. It also signifies a highly knowledgeable person.
- **Goendari** = The *damaru* of *Sambhoo/Sambhu* (where *Sambhoosek* means ruler/king of *Gandodeep* / *Panch Khand Dharati*).
- **Sambhoosek** = *Sanyu* + *bhu* + *sek* → “ruler of the five combined lands/continents.”
- **Sambhumadau** = *Sanyu* + *bhu* + *madau* → “our father/guardian of the five continents,” later reinterpreted as *Mahadev* / *Shankar* / *Shiv* / *Rudra*.
- **Sambhoo-Gavara** = Title for the ruling couple of *Koyamoorideep* (historically, there were 88 Sambhoos). *Sambhoo-Mula* was the first ruler couple, while *Sambhoo-Parvati* was the last.
- **Koilvaas** = Himalaya; *Yumma* = Yamuna; *Gunga* = Ganga; *Sulja* = Satlaj; *Harvakot* = Harappa; *Murvakot* = Mohenjodaro; *Magondmoori* = Montgomery; *Kondaharkot* = Kandahar; *Koylibedakot* = Kalibanga; *Tagari-Urtagari* = Tigris-Euphrates (*Dazla-Farat* rivers).
- **Dairbeer/Darvir/Dravin** = warrior/follower/worshipper of the parents.
- **Danav** = son of *dai-dau* (parents).
- **Dait / Daitur / Daibhut** = child/progeny of the parents.
- **Daisur** = protector/warrior of *dai* (mother).
- **Das** = servant (*sevak*) of *dai-dau* (parents), not in the sense of slave.
- **Jaayjantor Rajaal** = master/guardian/sovereign over flora and fauna of the land; Koytoors’ ancestral king/ruler-*Sambhoo* is therefore also known as *Pashupatinath*.

KEY ATTRIBUTES OF THE KOYA LANGUAGE

The Koya language, also known as Gondi, is an initial, unique and "perfect" language with roots in the proto-Dravidian family. It stands out for its distinct characteristics that go beyond typical Dravidian features. Here are its key attributes:

(i) Linguistic Structure- The Koya language is built on a phonemic structure, meaning it uses a system of distinct sounds (phonemes) to differentiate words. Its vocabulary is rich with root morphemes, the smallest units of language that carry meaning. Uniquely, the pronunciation of its words and letters is said to closely resemble the sounds of both living and non-living things found in nature.

(ii) Origin and Evolution- Unlike languages that primarily rely on word-roots, Koya is believed to have evolved directly from the sounds produced by natural entities. This suggests a deep connection to the environment, where the language's very foundation is tied to the world around it.

(iii) Grammatical Completeness- The language possesses a complete grammatical structure and a vast number of existing root morphemes, reinforcing its status as a fully formed and functional language. This structural integrity is what allows it to meet all standard linguistic norms.

RULES FOR FORMING PLURAL NOUNS IN THE KOYA / GONDI LANGUAGE

Based on M.R. Kangali's Gondi Vyakarana Tatha Bhasha Rachana: There are five primary rules for making a noun plural in Koya language.

(i) Adding a Suffix-

Plurals are commonly formed by adding a specific suffix to the end of the noun. The rule used depends on the word itself.

Rule 1: Adding -k, Examples: marri becomes mark, maanwal becomes maanwalk, and meen becomes meenk.

Rule 2: Adding -ang (or anusvara), This rule is used for words like **koda**, which becomes **kodang**, and **aaki**, which becomes **aaking**.

Rule 3: Adding -hak, Examples include **kor** turning into **kohak** and **sarpu** becoming **sarpuhak**.

Rule 4: Adding -lor, This suffix is common for words like **dau**, which becomes **daulor**, and **rajal**, which becomes **rajalor**.

(ii) Multiple Plural Forms- Some nouns can have more than one correct plural form.

Rule 5: Adding -lk or -lor, Nouns like **babal** can be made plural as either **babalk** or **babalor**. Similarly, **dadal** can be **dadalk** or **dadalor**.

Additionally, for nouns that end with the 'aa' vowel, they are generally added with 'aal' suffix, which also changes the pronunciation. For instance, **koya** becomes **koyaal**, and **Geeta** becomes **Geetaal**.

CRITICAL GUIDELINES FROM WALTER ASHLIN FAIRSERVIS (1921–1994)

This study follows Fairservis's methodological framework for interpreting the Indus script, which emphasizes the following principles:

1. **Precise Identification:** Each marked Indus sign must be clearly defined through systematic categorization and classification.
2. **Synonym Discovery:** Potential synonyms for these signs should be gathered from both Dravidian and pre-Dravidian languages.
3. **Wider Usage Selection:** Preference should be given to synonyms that show the broadest distribution across Dravidian languages, as these likely reflect ancient, historically convergent roots of pre-Dravidian origin.

4. **Contextual Accuracy:** The chosen words must align not only in their literal sense but also in contextual meaning with the Indus signs, ensuring coherent and consistent interpretation of the texts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Indus script appears to be a logo-syllabic system, where single pictographs represent full words and compound signs convey multisyllabic terms. Kangali's work successfully identified around 225 basic and compound signs, enabling the meaningful decipherment of about 250 texts in the pre-Dravidian Gondi language. His approach relied on root morphemes, contextually fitting synonyms, and reflections of early egalitarian socio-cultural values. This method yielded consistent interpretations even for the longest inscriptions (26 signs on a tablet, 36 signs on a copper plate by the author) and across diverse sites, including those in West Asia, making the findings open to international scholarly scrutiny and validation.

The linguistic heritage and socio-cultural traditions of the Koitoor (Koya) people, predating the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC), offer strong historical parallels. Evidence suggests that some Koya clans migrated to the Indus region, contributing to the rise of the IVC, while others remained in central India, preserving language and customs analogous to those reflected in Indus script readings. Following the decline of the IVC, certain Koitoor groups likely dispersed into nearby regions, shaping languages, cultures, social institutions, and dynastic traditions across the Indian subcontinent and possibly influencing societies as far as the southern hemisphere in early history.

CONCLUSION

Kangali's key contribution is his "natural origin" theory of the Koyas, which integrates their cosmology, geographical worldview, and Gondi linguistic roots. This framework positions the Koya/Koitoor heritage within a deep cultural continuum predating the Indus Valley Civilization (IVC). Genetic studies, such as those by Tony Joseph, support Indigenous claims of ancient ancestry, with examples like the Gond woman of Bastar carrying the M2 MtDNA lineage symbolising population continuity across millennia. She may even embody the archetype of the famed "Dancing Girl" of Mohenjo-daro, a timeless icon of Harappan culture. The Harappan script shares striking grammatical and morphemic parallels with the Koya language, setting it apart from mainstream Dravidian tongues. Kangali's decipherment builds on this linguistic foundation and the Koitoor's rich socio-cultural structure of phratries, clans, and totems, traced to the legendary Koya Pari Pahandi Kupa Lingo. The script, found on seals, tablets, and artefacts, is a logo-syllabic system of about 200 basic signs (419 with affixes), used for conveying words and short inscriptions tied to names, titles, and cultural motifs. Together, linguistic links, socio-cultural continuity, and genetic evidence strongly suggest that the Koya/Koitoor heritage is not only a living cultural tradition but also central to understanding the origins and meaning of the Harappan script and civilization.

Acknowledgements

This study is the result of the author's independent research and has not received financial support from any funding agency. The author sincerely thanks Tirumal Prakash Namdeo Salame (Amravati, Maharashtra) for his valuable suggestions and conveys heartfelt *Sewa Johar* (gratitude) to Tirumay Chandralekha Kangali (Nagpur), writer Tirumay Usha Kiran Atram, and Koytad Shatali Shedmake (Kachargarh, Gondia), as well as a BBC news media professional in New Delhi. Thanks, are also extended to Tirumal B.L. Korram (Rajnandgaon), Prof. K.M. Metry (Retd., Kannada University), and Prof. Dr. Surya Bali (AIIMS, Bhopal) for their kind support.

Special appreciation is offered to the Koitoor community of Central India for safeguarding and sharing their authentic knowledge of nature and traditional ways of life. The author also gratefully acknowledges the guidance of Prof. A. Gangatharan (Department of History, FSS, BHU). On a personal note, the author is deeply indebted to his wife, Tirumay Shilpi Gaur, and family members for their constant support and cooperation at home. With affection and pride, he acknowledges his son, Yatharth Ratan Gondwana (pursuing a Master's in Spatial Engineering and Honours Degree, University of Twente, Netherlands), and his daughter, Manavi Shilpi Gondwana (Class 11, KV BHU, CBSE), for their encouragement and assistance throughout the course of this research.

REFERENCES (MAIN)

- Masson, C. (1844). *Narrative of various journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan, the Panjab, & Kalat, during a residence in those countries; also, a narrative of a voyage from India to England, in the year 1826–27* (Vols. 1–2). Richard Bentley.
- Burnes, A. (1834). *Travels into Bokhara; being the account of a journey from India to Cabool, Tartary and Persia* (Vol. III). John Murray.
- Cunningham, A. (1875). “Harapa.” In *Report of the Archaeological Survey of India for the year 1872–73* (see ASI report), Government of India.
- Marshall, J. (1924, September 20). First light on a long-forgotten civilisation: New discoveries of an unknown prehistoric past in India. *Illustrated London News*, 165, 528–532, 548.
- Gadd, C. J., & Smith, S. (1931). *Sign-list of early Indus script* (chapter). In J. Marshall (Ed.), *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization* (Vol. II, pp. 406–422). Arthur Probsthain.
- Piccoli, G. A. (1933). A comparison between signs of the “Indus script” and signs in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Etruscarum*. *The Indian Antiquary*, 62, 213–215.
- Nath, P. (1931). *Hypothesis on similarities with Brahmi and possible Sanskrit links*.
- Langdon, S. (1931). “The Indus script.” In J. Marshall (Ed.), *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization* (Vol. II, pp. 423–455). Arthur Probsthain.
- Hunter, G. R. (1934). *The Script of Harappa and Mohen Jo-Daro and Its Connection with Other Scripts*. K. Paul, Trench, Trubner.
- Heras, H. (1953). *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture* (Vols. 1–2). Indian Historical Research Institute.
- Lal, B. B. (1966). The direction of writing in the Harappan script. *Antiquity*, 40, 52–55.
- Wheeler, M. E. M. (1968). *The Indus Civilization* (3rd ed., supplementary volume to *The Cambridge History of India*). Cambridge University Press.
- Zvelebil, K., & Soviet colleagues/other Dravidianists. (c. 1970). *Papers on Dravidian connections to Harappan script*.
- Waddell, L. A. (1976). *On Sumerian-Sanskrit analogies-specific work to be located*.
- Fairservis, W. A. (1971). *The Roots of Ancient India: The Archaeology of Early Indian Civilization*. Macmillan.
- Mahadevan, I. (1977). *The Indus Script: Texts, Concordance and Tables*. Archaeological Survey of India.
- Fairservis, W.A. (1992). *The Harappan Civilization and Its writing: A Model for the Decipherment of the Indus Script*, published in India by Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
- Parpola, A. (1994). *Deciphering the Indus Script*. Cambridge University Press.
- Possehl, G. L. (1996). *Critical reviews and syntheses of Indus script literature*. In G. L. Possehl (Ed.), *collections/papers on the Indus*.

Farmer, S., Sproat, R., & Witzel, M. (2004). The collapse of the Indus-script thesis: The myth of a literate Harappan civilization. *Electronic Journal of Vedic Studies*, 11(2), 19–57.

Chadha, A. (2010). Cryptographic imagination: Indus Script and the project of scientific decipherment. *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 47, 2, pp. 141-77.

Rao, R. P. N., Yadav, N., Vahia, M. N., Joglekar, H. J., Mahadevan, I., & Adhikari, R. (2009). Statistical analysis of the Indus script using *n*-grams. *arXiv*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/0901.3017>.

Atkinson, Quentin D. (15 April 2011), Phonemic Diversity Supports a Serial Founder Effect Model of Language Expansion from Africa, *Science*, Vol. 332, Issue: 6027, pp. 346-349 (<https://unidirectory.auckland.ac.nz>).

Vahia, M.N., Halkare, G. (July 2011). “Aspect of Gond Astronomy”, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, Journal- Man and Environment.

Paul, A. (2013). *The Gonds: Genesis, History and Culture*, ISBN: 978-81-237-6787-1, National Book Trust, India, New Delhi.

Wells, B. K. (2015). *The Archaeology and Epigraphy of Indus Writing*. Archaeopress.

Joseph, T. (2018). *Early Indians-The Story of Our Ancestors and Where We Came From*, Juggernaut Books, New Delhi.

Caldwell, R. (2019). *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South-Indian Family of Languages*, ISBN: 9789353920241, Alpha Editions, printed by Harrison and Sons, ST. Martin’s Lane.

LOCAL REFERENCES (HINDI)

Atram, U.K. (2018). *Gondwana Mei Kachargarh Pavitra Bhumi*, ISBN: 978-93-88867-11-5, Vaibhav Prakashan, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Bhalavi, R.S.M.S. (1938). *Koya Punemta Saar* (Gist of Koya’s Natural True Marg), translated by Kangali, M.R., (1989), Ujjawal Society, Jaytala Road, Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Dhoke, R. B. (2007). ‘Gondwana Land Ka Manav Gond’, Gondwana Mahasabha, Bhopal, M.P.

Dhurve, P. (2020). *Bharat Ke Adivasi Hindu Nahi Hai*, Dipa Prakashan, Jetwan Buddhavihar Javad, Vaaygaon, Wardha, Maharashtra.

Dhurve, S. (2014). ‘Jai Gondwana’, Rang Prakashan Indore, M.P.

Dhurve, S. (2015). ‘Mera Gondwana Mahan’, Rang Prakashan Indore, M.P.

Gondwana Ta Pathari (2017). *Yermihtana: Ek Mahan Gotul*, Published by Punem Shodh Sangat, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

Kangali, C.L. (2000, 1st ed.). ‘Gondwana Jeev Jagat Ki Utpatti Utthan Patan Aur Punarutthan Sangharsh’, 48, Ujjawal Society Jaytala Road Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Kangali, M. R. (2000, 1st ed.). ‘Gondwana Kot Darshan’, 48, Ujjawal Society Jaytala Road Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Kangali, M. R. (2011). *Brihat Hindi Gondi Shabdkosh*, compiled, Gondwana Aadim Bhasha Sahitya Sanshodhan Mandal, 48, Ujjawal Society Jaytala Road Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Kangali, M.R. (1984, 1st ed.). *Gondwana Ka Sanskritik Itihas*, 48, Ujjawal Society, Jaytala Road, Nagpur.

Kangali, M.R. (1989). *Pari Kupa Lingo Koya/Gondi Punem Darshan*, 48, Ujjawal Society, Jaytala Road, Nagpur.

Kangali, M.R. (1994 1st ed.). *Gondi Vyakaran Tatha Bhasha Rachana* (Gondi Kadkiyan Unde Lambej Chavadi), 48, Ujjawal Society, Jaytala Road, Nagpur.

Kangali, M.R. (2002, 1st ed.). *Saindhavi-Lipi Ka Gondi Mein Udvachan* (Decipherment of Indus Script in Gondi), 48, Ujjawal Society, Jaytala Road, Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Koyavansi, K. (2014). Gantantra Ke Janak – Koitoors: Gonds, Aadim Shodh Satsang Evam Gondwana Gondi Sahitya Parishad, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh.

Marai, K.S. (2002). Gondwana Bhukhand Ka Prasangik Kathavastu, Akhil Gondwana Gondi Sahitya Parishad, Nagpur.

Maravi, L. (2016). Koyant Lambej (Gondi Bhasha) Ki Utpatti Evam Vikas, Madhav Press, Balaghat, M.P.

Metry, K.M. (2017). Gondwana Gondi Dictionary, Compiled, Department of Tribal Studies, Kannada University, Hampi, Karnataka.

Metry, K.M. (2021). Kurumans: A Group of Tribes- An Ethnographic Study, Vidyanidhi Prakashana, ISBN: 978-81-910869-9-9, Sri Sivakumar Agency, Gadag, Karnataka.

Sagar, S.L. (2013). Mul Nivasiyon Par Akraman, Manovikas Prakashan, Bejhanbag, Nagpur.

Sidam, S.B. (2002). Dravidiano Ka Sankshipt Samajik Itihas, published by S.B. Sidam, A/21, Shahpura, Arun Offset Printers, Patel Colony, Kolar Road, Bhopal.

Sidam, S.B. (2011). Gondwana Bhumandal, published by Badadev Punarutthan Sangh, Bhopal (Arun Offset Printers, Kolar Road, Bhopal) M.P.

Tumram, V. (2016). Adivasi / Indigenious Aur Unka Nisarg Dharm, Sudhir Prakashan, Ganesh Nagar, Wardha, Maharashtra.

FURTHER INFORMATION & REFERENCES

1. International Anglo-American Cultural and Literary Studies Symposium (16-18 November 2022), Proceedings Book, HISTORY AND LEGENDS OF ORIGIN OF THE KOITOORS, pp. 204-206. ([HTTPS:// WWW.IZDAS.ORG/](https://www.izdas.org/))

2. International Hanskeyf Scientific Research and Innovation Congress, International Science and Art research (ISARC) 17-18 December 2022, Proceedings Book, HISTORY OF EVOLUTION OF KOYA LANGUAGE AND KOYAPUNEM, pp. 1402-1406.

3. International Interdisciplinary Congress of Women in Science, “Diversity, Careers, Interdisciplinarity”, January 13-14, 2023/ Sivas-TURKIYE, Proceedings Book, PRE-DRAVIDIAN KOYAS/KOITOORS: MOTHER OF DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGES, pp. 479-486. WEB: <https://www.iksadkongre.com/women>, E-Mail: contact@ijosper.co.uk

4. International Mediterranean Congress, Beirut, (February 2-3, 2023) Proceedings Book, PRE-DRAVIDIAN KOITOORS: FATHER OF GANDTANTRA, pp. 217-229. [HTTPS://WWW.IZDAS.ORG/AKDENIZ](https://www.izdas.org/AKDENIZ)

5. 9th International Zeugma Conference on Scientific Research (February 19-21, 2023) Gaziantep, Turkiye, Proceedings Book, DECIPHERMENT OF INDUS SCRIPT BY APPLICATION OF ROOT MORPHEMES OF PRE-DRAVIDIAN KOYA LANGUAGE, pp. 760-784. www.zeugmakongresi.org

6. Atlas 10th International Social Sciences Congress (March 9-10, 2023) Konya-Turkiye, Proceedings Book, GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURE OF THE HARAPPAN LESSONS, pp. 91-102. www.atlasconference.org

7. World Women Conference-V, March 7-8, 2023/ Baku-AZERBAIJAN, Proceedings Book, STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE KOITOOR SOCIETY AND IMPORTANCE, pp. 525-540. <http://www.worldwomenconference.org/>, info@worldwomenconference.org

8. 3rd International EGE Congress On Scientific Research (December 20-22, 2024) Izmir, Turkiye, Proceedings Book, UNDERSTANDING THE INDUS SCRIPT, TEXTS, SYMBOLS AND READING THEM WITH CONSISTENCY THROUGH PRIMEVAL KOITOORS’ LANGUAGE THEIR UNIQUE SOCIAL STRUCTURE CULTURE AND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM, pp. 411-417. WEB: <https://www.egekongreleri.org>